

Newport-Mesa Unified School District
ATHLETIC PROGRAM GUIDELINES

Booster Clubs

The intent of the booster club is to promote, provide support, and encourage our athletes during their participation in their respective sports. The purpose of a booster club is also to provide additional resources in order to enhance the experiences of the student athletes. The club should be committed to providing a quality program that encompasses the total development of our student athletes.

Parents of players involved in athletic programs are usually part of the organized booster club, and parent participation can include:

- Attending games
- Helping with various events and fundraisers
- Attending Booster club meetings
- Being an active part of the booster organization and board

It is the desire and expectation of the athletic department that many parents will join and contribute in some way to the booster organization supporting their respective sport.

But there is a ***clear separation*** between the legitimate functions that are the responsibility of the district athletic program and the activities of the Booster Clubs:

- Booster organizations do not participate in choosing players or deciding on which team-level athletes will play.
- Boosters should not expect to be involved in coaching decisions or strategies in any way.
- All decisions and all responses to situations on the field or the court are the sole responsibility of the coaching staff.
- Any issues that a parent and/or booster would like to raise with the coach should be brought to the head coach at a separate time and place after the conclusion of the athletic contest. Usually the next day or a 24-hour waiting time is optimal.
- Parents and/or boosters who would like to address a lower level coach should schedule a meeting time when the head coach can be in attendance.
- A separate “Communication Protocol for Conflict Resolution” has been created to guide the discussion and handling of specific concerns or conflicts.

The welfare and education provided for the student athletes is the primary function of district employees. Boosters are not district employees, and should remember that it is the district employed coaches and officials who are accountable for the services provided by the athletic programs.

The coach and the athletic director should establish priorities of the needs for the athletic program. These priorities should be expressed to the boosters after they have been approved by the athletic director and the Principal. The donation of time or money must be made in accordance with state, district, CIF-SS and student body rules and regulations.

Boosters *may not* make payments directly to district employees; doing so sets up the booster organization as an employer and thus obligates the group to follow all sections of the California labor laws, including statutory benefits and required insurances; the risks to groups that are not registered employers are serious. Any booster donation to support district personnel (coaches, trainers, classified staff, etc.) must be made to the district fiscal department so that it can be processed appropriately for the employee through the district payroll system under the employer authorizations established by the district.

Coaches should remember that the booster organization is separate from the school district and all booster funds are the property of the booster club. The booster club makes funding and support decisions as an independent agency, and no coach should assume that the booster organization will approve a proposed expenditure. Certainly it is not appropriate for a coach to make a purchase or create a financial obligation for the booster club without their prior approval.

Booster club social gatherings and banquets, although generally not considered school-sponsored events, should exemplify and model positive experiences for our student athletes. In keeping with our educational and health goals, alcohol should never be available or served when students are present.